

*Christianity an Embodiment of the Life
of Christ.*

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

CLEVELAND, OHIO, OCTOBER 2, 1888.

BY

REV. HENRY HOPKINS, D.D.,

PASTOR FIRST CHURCH, KANSAS CITY, MO.

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“I AM THE LIFE.” — *John xiv: 6*. “THE CHURCH, WHICH IS HIS BODY, THE FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL.” — *Ephesians i: 23*.

EMBODIMENT is a law of life. So far as we can know it is a necessity of life. Of this natural law in the realm of pure spirit we make here no affirmation, but of the life principle as we are cognizant of it, it is true that unembodied or disembodied it ultimately ceases to be. It may lie dormant, but at last it obeys the hidden impulse toward outward expression, or it perishes. A germ finally becomes germinant or dies.

Each kind of life inevitably and persistently seeks after the outward expression which is its own. In the phenomena of crystallization, which beautifully foreshadow those of life, we find the different kinds of matter striving each after its distinctive form, its hexagon or its rhomboid, and, however thwarted, always doing its best to realize its ideal. In all vegetable and animal life, whatever variation of type may take place in the long processes of creative evolution, the force of life still works under the imperious law which binds every seed to bring forth “after its kind,” and which clothes every germ with “its own body.”

When we reach that life of man which is the real life, which is characteristic of him as man, and which it must be acknowledged by all, agnostic or Christian, is not the life of the body, does the same law hold good? Is there an ideal form after which the spiritual man strives? Is there a distinctive embodiment of manhood, of character, of selfhood, to which, if let alone, man will attain? This there must be if he is conformed to the cosmos, to the order of things in which he stands. Our answer to this question is: Yes, there is an ideal toward which man's spiritual nature always dimly strives, but man, if left to himself, will not attain that ideal. This is the paradox of human nature. Here also is its mystery and here its tragedy. Man is made in the

image of God. To that divine type he is conformable; but as the very characteristic of that image is in the free will, and in the choice by that free will of holiness, he must of course voluntarily and consciously conform to that type.

Man, because he is man, in order to attain to his perfection, must choose to do it; this he does not of himself do. Pathetic beyond expression, agonizing beyond measure, are the consequences contained in that statement. As a matter of fact, man if left alone does not, by any unconscious force of life in him, realize his ideal, nor is it his ruling purpose to do so. However you may account for it, or by whatever name you may call it, the fact remains. A herd of buffalo on the plains is a herd of buffalo still. Human beings in masses, wherever you find them, not only prey upon, but corrupt one another; they create slums, and often breed down and out. But if you put human beings off in isolation they degenerate. The most unnatural crimes are reported from the remotest hamlets. There is a deadly break here in the ascending series of life. Something there is, terribly wrong with this creature who with his fellows is corrupted, and by himself is debased. This it is, whether you call it weakness or wickedness, unripeness or sin, which makes it needful that he be somehow helped from outside of and above himself.

This is the point of departure of the evangelical faith. It comes, declaring the need, not of development, but of redemption. It proclaims a new divine life, a new man, a new society. Regeneration is its watchword of hope and of power. Man is made for the divine image, but that image is marred and broken. "The forces of his life have become perverted and inverted with every possible abuse." How now shall this lost ideal be realized, this divine image be produced? The image, the likeness, the outward form is evermore the product of the inner life; therefore, to impart the divine image, impart the divine life. There can, in the nature of the case, be no other way; and this is our Christianity.

It is Scougal who has said that "religion is the life of God in the soul of man." May we not add that the history of all true religion is the record of this divine life embodying itself? It is this which will be found at last to give unity to the history of the race itself; "the life of Christ the central period, and the cross of Christ the central point" of it all.

That the idea of embodying the divine life in humanity for its

redemption is the unifying idea of Scripture, no student of the Holy Word can doubt. There are constantly these two factors: God over all; God in all. God to be adored; God to be received. The life of God; the life of God revealed in human lives and human history.

The supreme worth of the history of Israel is in this, that it reveals an embodiment in humanity of the divine idea. This revelation was indeed antecedent to the history of that nation, and even to the covenant with Abraham. It goes back to the beginning, but at last in this people of God, in whom God dwelt, is seen the purpose to incarnate in life and history the divine thought for men. We know in how poor and fragmentary a way Israel realized this, but the history is a testimony. God is manifested. Man is not alone; he is helped by the Eternal. Jacob's vision of the ladder, with angels of God ascending and descending, was an epitome of the old covenant. It was to this that Christ referred when he said, "Hereafter ye shall see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." God is in communication with man. The infinite and the finite are joined. Therefore Israel represented Jehovah among the nations. Through them indeed was his "name profaned among the Gentiles," but after all, the commonwealth of Israel not only upheld a pure monotheism, but, "continuing as it did for generations, free, happy, and prosperous, knowing neither pauperism nor excessive wealth," it was, in its moral code and in its economic and sanitary regulations, a better embodiment of the divine thought for a State than are many of the so-called Christian commonwealths of today. Along with this actual history there runs ever through the Old Testament, in prophecy and song, the sublime conception of the everlasting kingdom of God, of which Israel and her king, and Jerusalem and her palaces, are only symbols.

To the individual believer in that olden time, as to the believer today, God gave not only a law or a ritual, but himself; not alone the Shekinah or the temple, "for thus saith the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit."

If now we read our New Testament with this thought of a divine embodiment in mind it will seem to tell us little else. Everything comes back to this. All miracle, and parable, and

precept, lead us to the esoteric truth of a divine life, given to man and embodied in him.

It was said at the beginning that embodiment was a necessity of life ; it is not for us to say that this is true of the infinite principle of all life. We may not declare that incarnation is the law of the Eternal Spirit, but we have learned in our day that the conception of an absent and far-off God is pagan, and that God, immanent in nature and in the world, is the truth of Holy Scripture. There is a Christian pantheism which sees in every cosmic or psychic force the divine power manifested ; which interprets the unfolding leaf and flower or the uprising of a great people alike, as the signs of God's life revealing itself. We may not declare embodiment to be a necessity of the divine life, but we are taught of the Spirit that "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

Central, luminous, glorious, in Scripture is the revelation of the God-man. In the person of the Christ this fact of the incarnation has entered into our human history.

This is not a shadow, a dream, a sentiment, a creation of the philosophic or poetic imagination ; it is the central historic fact from which, by inductive process, we build the form and structure of our theology. This fact of incarnation is the keystone of the arch of Christian truth ; that gone, the whole structure lies in fragments. This, therefore, for missionary and minister, is the beginning of all preaching. "Whom we preach." Dr. Bushnell has written : "Considered as the God-man, then, there is not a single fact or scene in the history which, fully conceived, does not yield some lesson of power. The infancy ; the thirty years of silent preparation ; the recoil of poor human nature, called the temptation, when the work begins ; every healing, every miracle, every friendship, every condemnation, every denunciation, the lot of poverty, the hour of oppressed feeling, the weariness and sleep ; the miraculous hem of his garment ; the transfiguration ; the prayers ; the amazing assumption of a common glory and right with the Father ; the agony, the trial, the crucifixion, the resurrection, the appearances and teachings afterwards ; and, last of all, the ascension, followed by the descent of the Spirit to represent and be himself, according to his promise, a Christ everywhere present, everywhere accessible, no longer limited and localized in space ;

in all these, and in all he said and taught concerning God, himself and us, the preacher is to find staple matter for his messages."

"In the fullness of time" there was the life upon the earth of this one who could say: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" of whom, by his servant Paul, it is declared: "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily" (Col. ii: 9), and this was for the redemption of man. The divine image is to be implanted. How? By implanting the divine life. "I am the life;" "Because I live, ye shall live also;" "I in the Father and ye in me, and I in you;" "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" "Apart from me ye can do nothing;" "Christ in you, the hope of glory." These are a few of the passages that plainly teach the reality of the indwelling presence of Christ in the believer, as the life of his life. To those in unbelief he declares, "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life."

He is represented as the second Adam, the progenitor of a new race. This life is received by an entire turning away from the old life and by an entire trusting of the soul to him, that is, by repentance and faith. To the open soul he comes in. He is born in the man. This is regeneration by the power of the Holy Spirit. There is a new motive, a new controlling love, a new governing purpose. Christ is now "formed in him." It is now, "Christ in him the hope of glory." Now the new life shapes its manifestation; now consciously, also, he strives after this, and more and more, unconsciously, every thought and activity is molded by this life. This is the profound meaning of that saying, "In him is life, and the life is the light of men." Light is that by means of which we see where we go—"the life is the light;" this is the guiding principle. There is now supplied for the man what the plants have, each in its unconscious striving after its ideal, a guiding, molding, shaping force, a life principle that will embody itself in Christ-form; we can now have a Christ-man, a Christian. This is the soul of Christian experience.

If there be any reality in the united testimony of all the believers of the Christian centuries, then is this real: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." In the personal life this will determine its aim—to be like him, this will fill the thought. The redeemed man is this: One in whom thus the divine image is being formed, who is

attaining unto a "full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Nothing higher than this can be imagined; nothing less than this can satisfy.

So in our efforts for others, this will determine our action. What a man knows or believes, where he is, what he has, these things are not for him of great consequence, save as they effect this embodiment in him of this divine life; for being is more than getting. We seek not to make adherents to our creed or our name, but to make Christ-men; to reproduce the life of Christ in the regenerate and sanctified life of his followers. The truth we preach is the truth which a man may become.

This shows to us, not only our aim, but our method also. Those who thus embody Christ, represent Christ. He is known through them, and through them he does his saving work. "I, if I be lifted up from the earth," saith our Lord, "will draw all men unto myself." How shall he be lifted up before the nations? By tireless proclamation of the history? Yes, but also by lives of love in sacrifice. After his resurrection, in the upper chamber, Jesus said to them again: "Peace be with you." "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." We, then, are to be in the world as he was in the world. Brethren, determining to know only Christ and him crucified, it is not the iteration of a man-made theory of the atonement linked in concatenations of logic and buttressed with Scripture texts, which, when it is finished, is usually a lifeless thing, and when it is preached has little power over heart and conscience; nor is it solely the repeating of that story which shall never lose its power, of the cross on which the Prince of Life died, and from which the drops of his atoning blood fell upon our earth; nor is it alone by the continued showing forth of his death until he come, in the holy eucharist of his appointment. It is along with all this, the giving of our own lives in Christ's name to save men, as Christ gave his life—for the despised ones, for the weak ones, for the worst ones, for the unthankful, for enemies. It is giving the life for these in solitariness as he did, in persecution, and if need be in death, as he did. Ah! if we could but so embody Christ, by thus dying to self and the world, thus sacrificing all for others, then should we in truth know nothing among men save Christ and him crucified; then in reality would he be perpetually lifted up, and all men be drawn unto him. He alone "bore our sins in his own body on the

tree ;" in his finished work our souls repose ; nevertheless it is needful that those who come after him should, like him, come under the universal law of vicarious suffering if they would help in saving men. The apostle Paul waxes very bold, and declares to the Colossians : " I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church." We get thus some glimpse of the scope and meaning of the truth of the embodiment of Christ's life in the personal life.

But we are reminded by this passage, as by our text, that the individual life is not the only embodiment of Christ. There is, we know, a perfection of humanity beyond that of the individual. The family, as we sometimes for a little while see it, illustrates this. In the ideal home are the wisdom and dignity of age, the calm strength of mature life, the enthusiasm of youth, and the sweet charms of childhood and infancy. Thus all forces and aptitudes of diverse sex and temperament, of differing age and relation, blended in the mutual ministries of love, make up a corporate existence which, informed and irradiated by the Spirit of God, is a higher product of spiritual life than any one of its members can be. A Christian household, as a silent witness to the power of Christ and as an effective agent in the work of Christ, is something other and more than the sum of the testimony and work of its members.

There is a provision made for a still more exalted embodiment of spiritual life in the local church, made up of Christian families, which, shaping organization, worship, and work, according to the law of its own inward divine life, unites tendencies, harmonizes efforts, utilizes gifts, compacts strength, and so "may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building of itself in love." This conception meets its culmination in the representations in the New Testament of the church universal, as revealed in the text : "His body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." It will find its realization in the consummations of human history in that day when we behold "the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."

Are we dealing here only with metaphors? Surely not. There is imbedded in Christianity, not as an incidental or an ancillary element, but as organic and essential, the idea of an embodiment of Christ's life in this world in a renovated society. That "incarnation in order to redemption" is the phrase out of the unfolding of which comes the logical and orderly statement of all Christian truth, some of us were taught as pupils in theology, and to the careful student this grows every day more evident; but it remains to be announced and to be acknowledged, that *the truth of incarnation is the key to every practical problem that confronts humanity and the church*. Human nature confessing Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, as our Lord himself tells us, is the rock upon which he will build his invincible church; but that confession of him must be not of the intellect alone, with the lips, but also in the life and in the life of the church. Now, he is known through his church. The eminent divine charter of the church is contained in the words: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Whenever there is a true gathering together and a gathering together truly in the name of Christ, there is a true church, and where the true church is, there always is the indwelling Christ. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and severally members thereof." He lives in his church, he works through it. "Apart from me ye can do nothing." The birthday of the church was Pentecost, when the living Spirit took possession of the body.

Now, it is this truth of a living Christ in his church that is needed; faith, not alone in her mighty Lord who went away, though it was to return, but in the continued presence of her mighty Lord; belief, not alone in the incarnation as an accomplished fact, but *belief also in a derived and continued incarnation through Christ in his church*, "I in them, thou in me."

When we speak of the church, we should mean one of three things — either the church local; the church catholic, embracing all at one time upon the earth who have been baptized into the Christian name, the good and the evil; and lastly, the church universal, in which is contained all of every age and name and race in whom the power of sin has been broken, who have been forgiven and sanctified. To each of these it belongs to realize in its measure the manifestation of Christ's life; to be his body. The church, which is in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, each local

body, is called to be this. The church now dismembered and separated, scattered in all lands, called by many names, is called as never before to be this ; but the language of the text suggests an embodiment which can only be realized in the consummation of history by the church universal. I am not sure about the precise exegetical meaning of the text, "The church, his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all," but I am sure that there is an exceeding largeness in it. The risen, glorified, triumphant, reigning Lord finds in it complete representation of himself. "The fullness of him that filleth all in all." Then his enemies shall have been made his footstool, and all men shall know the Lord. Then "the kingdom of the world shall have become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." The church will then be the world, and the world the church. That reign is to be not only over all races, but over all forces. That kingdom shall include in its scope and sweep all of good that the kingdom of the world had striven for. "They shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it." In that day shall be fulfilled, not only Isaiah's prophecy, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising," but also Ezekiel's vision of the spirit of the living creature moving all the wheels. There shall be rulership in and over the forces and the uniformities of nature, as well as the hearts of men. When man's moral likeness shall be restored, there shall be given to him his full dominion over the creatures, which by sin he lost. That is what this age of science means ; of this it gives us foregleams. It is not a revolt from God, but a preparation for his kingdom. A godless science, like King Hiram's workmen in forests and mines afar from Jerusalem, is patiently, though all unconsciously, preparing the pillars and the ornaments for a temple in which shall dwell the shekinah of a manifested Divinity whose very existence it denies.

The ages shall not go backward, nor the long results of time be lost. No province of knowledge shall be given back to ignorance ; no victory over nature surrendered ; no force tamed and harnessed let go. The steel rails are not to be taken up, nor the wires to be taken down, nor the printing presses to be destroyed, except to give place to more perfect appliances. A more complex civilization than ours there will be, if this kingdom is ever set up on the earth, and all will be informed and vivified by the Spirit of the living God.

The essential nature of the kingdom of God is indeed spiritual, but the spiritual is by inherent necessity forever clothing itself in form, is always weaving from the material the outward symbol of itself. The outcome of human history will be not solitude, but society; not the Garden of Eden come back, but the City of God come down.

We have been afraid to assert the ascendancy of Christ over the agencies and forces that we call natural; but to whom do they belong if not to him? This world is his, he made it — all that it contains is his of right, and shall certainly be brought to minister to those who are the heirs of salvation. Why should we not recognize in its full import this fact? It gives us the right, and imposes upon us the duty of possessing all agencies and informing with the spirit of Christ all forces, *now*. The law of the correlation of force goes higher than the region of physics. Instead of fearing lest we dishonor the gospel if we use the latest and the best appliances of this age of scientific method, we need rather to reproach ourselves lest we defraud the church of its rightful inheritance by neglecting them. Shall we use sails to give God opportunity to send us favoring winds? Whose gifts are those astounding and beneficent discoveries of our time? For what purpose are they? Are these newest marvels a malign element in the world's life? That depends on the use made of them. They may be used to build Babylon for destruction, or the city of the King as an habitation for his saints forever. Peter's vision upon the house-top had its application for him in his time; may it not reach us also, "What God hath cleansed call not thou common?" In this connection notice the context, "and he put all *things* in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all *things* to the church." The divine is to possess the human — science and industry, commerce and arts, literature and statesmanship, society, education, amusements, philanthropy, are all some day to be possessed for Christ and by Christ. Why hesitate, then, to begin to possess them now?

In old time there was an inspiration of the Spirit of God in Bezaleel, to devise cunning works in gold and in silver, and in brass, as well as of Moses to decree statutes and judgments. In the New Testament description of the body of Christ there is the hand and the foot, as well as the eye and the tongue, and upon the less honorable was bestowed more abundant honor; and

so it came to pass that there was the upbuilding of the one body. We expect Moses to build a tabernacle without the help of Bezaleel; we ordain for missionaries hearts, and brains, and tongues, and forget to send along feet and hands. In our lofty and scriptural conception of the efficacy of preaching, we have sometimes forgotten that "the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."

It is one of the marked characteristics of the religious movements of our time, that there is a recognition of the need of a varied ministry, not the varied ministry of one man, but the ministry of varied men, and so of an embodied gospel. The discussions of the London Conference showed this trend. The interdenominational meetings in Mexico revealed the same. A doctrine of obstacles was recognized; the fact that sometimes it is wise instead of spending time in firing up the locomotive to get down and shovel the sand off the track. The encyclical of the Pan-Anglican Council gives small space to doctrine, or order, or ritual, and makes large mention of temperance, social purity, the sanctity of marriage, and Sabbath observance. It affirms the social and political life of the day to be the proper field for Christian work.

In several of our theological seminaries there are now courses of instruction in sociology, which modern science I understand to be the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," intelligently carried out in its general applications.

Consider, too, the nature of the argument now mainly put forward in defense of Christianity. The internal evidence is not discredited, but the chief reliance is on the embodied fact that Christianity is. This age demands facts, and we confront it with — first, Christ himself; second, the transformed characters and lives of individuals; and third, with the history and the spectacle of Christendom. History is appealed to with a new fullness and with overwhelming force. A distinguished cardinal of the Roman church has recently presented in a succinct and powerful manner the argument from the continuous organized and visible life of Christianity in the world; but to his brethren outside of the pale it seems evident that he weights down and immeasurably weakens his plea by urging the exclusive claims of Rome; and that he strangely fails to notice that the cities and the lands where that form of Christianity has had longest and most exclusive sway are the very ones that are

conspicuous for the absence in them of the light and liberty, the peace, righteousness, and true progress which the gospel brings. There has been lately published a book which has put the entire church, and the republic of letters as well, under obligations to its author. Its chapters move on one after another like regiments, with perfect alignment and in faultless form. Every paragraph carries a weapon of truth, and the light of heaven gleams on their polished sentences. Over them all is the beauty of the banner with the sign in which the Christian hosts conquer; while behind comes a ponderous and royal train laden with treasures of the ages and with ammunition of the latest form — an appendix, full and precious. This army corps is called *The Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated by its Historical Effects*.

Suffer me now to call attention to signs in the same direction in the operations of our own Board. I pass the altered policy as regards education, and mention, as an illustration of the embodiment of Christianity, the *medical work* of the Board.

This is coming yearly into increasing prominence, and its relations to the educational and evangelistic departments are being fully adjusted. It is now understood that the dispensary and hospital are as inherently a part of a complete mission station as the chapel or the school. On them also belongs the sacred symbol of the cross. In the mission rooms at Boston there is upon the wall a large, red tablet, inscribed with gilt Chinese characters, which was originally placed in 1875 upon the walls of Dr. Osgood's hospital at Foochow, by a Chinese military officer, to commemorate a cure wrought upon him. A native band of musicians and a liberal expenditure of fire-crackers attended when he put the tablet in position, and afterwards he made a liberal offering in money to the hospital. So often on heathen ground the work and workers are brought into notice and into favor, even as the multitude thronged to Jesus when he healed them. By this means also is opportunity afforded for direct religious instruction and influence. But beyond all this there is a practical teaching concerning the nature of our Christianity; not a teaching, indeed, by word of mouth, but an embodied Christianity. Wherever on heathen ground our beloved missionary physicians rear the hospital and the dispensary they present an object lesson; and it consists not only in a practical teaching of the golden rule, but it also may declare unmistakably the foundation fact that the

gospel offers a whole salvation, considers sacred and seeks to redeem man — the entire man, the body as well as the spirit. In other words it continues the work of Jesus Christ, who, when upon the earth, made men whole. The gospel is thus saved from an inadequate, unsymmetrical, and in so far forth, false embodiment.

My meaning may be illustrated further by the providential trend of our mission work, abroad as well as at home, towards *industrial training*. If the great care bestowed by our Lord upon the bodies of men has for us a profound meaning and suggestion, no less should we be taught by the honor he put upon physical toil, upon the industries of the hand, upon the artisan and the laboring man. We shall not rightly embody the Master's life in our generation if we forget the carpenter shop at Nazareth, where with his own hands he earned his own bread, or the nets and the boats of Galilee where he found the earliest of his disciples. Hard work is God's ordinance for the moral training of us all. More than we even yet suppose, is human well-being involved in the manual labor problem, and in the various aspects of the industrial question. Woe to the sons of men when the conditions of their lot make labor either needless or hopeless.

The conditions of human life are such, that for the transformation of man there must be the grace of God plus hard work. This is not a discovery of our day; it was an apostolic message to new converts that they "work with their hands," as he had charged them, in order that they might be honest toward outsiders, and themselves have need of nothing. And it has been found that this very thing, "working with the hands," is that in which instruction is most needed. Those monks found it so who plunged into the gloomy depths of the endless forests that covered mediæval Europe, to proclaim the gospel to the warring pagans that lived there; and they showed them how to guide the plow, plant the orchard, and build the mill, while they taught them the gospel, the chant, and the litany. That was a wonderful model for an evangelizing church in the midst of our modern nineteenth century paganism, given us by the old Benedictines in the days when they were true missionaries, before the salt had lost its savor. Going in a band among the wild tribes, they built first their place of worship; on it they lavished their choicest treasure; but soon around the abbey church sprung up one after another the great kitchen where the poor were fed, the hospital where the poor sick were

attended, the school into which the surrounding boys were gathered, the chapter house where the laws of the order were enacted, and the library in which the priceless treasures of learning were preserved.

The Moravians—how fragrant to this day the name!—of whom Chalmers said, “that for the charm by which they wrought he would willingly exchange all the parade of human eloquence and all the confidence of human argument,”—they found it so. The carpenter and the potter went along with the knight, and sought like the tent-maker of Tarsus to be chargeable to none. They have consistently tried, at least by example, to develop this industrial idea.

In an old life of Rev. John Sargeant, the first missionary to the Housatonic Indians in western Massachusetts, it appears that he had by elaborate plans provided for the development of the industrial idea, and so anticipated more than a hundred years Hampton, and Carlisle, and the Santee Agency. The experiment was tried in the Sandwich Islands, not with complete success; but the Hilo school was always a labor school, and the testimony is that it fitted the best teachers and missionaries that the islands produced, and that their students are today among the solid men of the country. At the present time there are in operation under our Board five industrial schools—one in Bulgaria, one in Turkey, one in Ceylon, one in South Africa, and one in India. The Deccan Industrial School at Sirur, in the Poona district of India, issues its report just now, with a print upon the cover of a Holy Bible radiating light, while in a circle about it are the common implements of industry—the pick-ax and the plow, the square and the plane, the saw and the hammer, the shovel, the ax and the anvil; and over all we read the legend, “The Hope of India.” The disabilities imposed by caste make the truth thus expressed emphatically true for that vast empire; but the application of it is universal.

The first and most urgent stage of mission work is: “Hold the rope and I will go down;” but there comes a second, when it becomes necessary to ask: What shall I do with this man that I have taken out of the pit? It is perfectly true that that which is secondary in the first stage of mission work becomes primary in the second stage. The logic of events justifies the saying of a distinguished son of one of our noblest missionaries: “If mission work begins by proclaiming the gospel, it must end by organizing

society." There has been no organic force in the political and social changes that are bringing in the better day to be for a moment compared to that of the value put by Christ upon the least and the weakest of mankind.

Now there is certainly grave danger that in the development of these features of which mention has been made the value of the individual soul, as seen in the light of eternity, should be lost sight of, and primary spiritual work be subordinated; but certainly it need not be so. John Frederick Oberlin proved that, more than a hundred years ago, among the debased descendants of the Huguenots, who for seven generations had been isolated and abandoned in the mountains of the Vosges. Home life, education, industrial arts, tree-planting, road-making, did not cool his ardor for souls or cause him to feel any the less his dependence on God, but they made possible and permanent a work, the record of which might be for today a text-book on the embodiment of Christianity. Surely spirituality should be increased by any service that can be done in Christ's name, for those for whom Christ died. Brainard, prostrate before God, agonizing for souls, melting the hearts of his poor Indians by the flaming love of his appeals, was a divinely spiritual man. He prayed and toiled in view of the issues of eternity, and was rewarded by amazing scenes of the converting power of the Spirit of God. Those converts of his did nothing to perfect society. The very tribes to which they belonged are no more, but their redeemed souls are glorifying their Saviour. Brainard stands as a most exalted type of the missionary.

Henry Martyn, working on in the midst of frightful crowds of serpentine, bestial, low-caste Hindoos, writes in what has been called "the most pathetic of all journals:" "I lay in tears interceding for the unfortunate natives of this country, thinking within myself that the most despicable Sudra of India was of as much value in the sight of God as the King of Great Britain;" and further, "I found my heaven begun on earth—no work so sweet as that of praying and living wholly to the service of God." What wonder that the spot where he used to kneel has become one of the places of Christian pilgrimage in India? Better in God's sight, and better for the eternal kingdom of God, one Brainard or Martyn, with no agency but the Word and the Spirit of God, than ten thousand of what Christlieb calls "culture fanatics." But Christian Frederick Schwartz was as noble a type as either of them, and he was a

builder. This is a picture of him, from the "Dawn of the Modern Mission:" "And so through years of storm and carnage we see this simple-minded, simple-living Christian missionary becoming a political power for the time, sent on critical embassies between contending armies, because it is safe for no other man to go, administering a whole province, and writing elaborate state minutes upon the collection of revenue and the procedure of justice, and turned back by no danger from any work to which he had set his hand; yet never pausing in his work of preaching Jesus Christ, and opening stations and training native workers, and caring for the neglected soldiers, and building shelters for the orphans, and laying up, like Joseph, large provision for the years of famine; plain, unpretending figure, clad in black dimity, and found everywhere with ministering hand where sorrow, suffering, or need called him."

As a rule, spiritual intensity will depend upon concentration, but others may do what the preacher may not.

Certainly it is plain that a practical test of Christianity is at this time demanded from two opposite directions. On the one hand we are asked for a distinctly unworldly, extra-worldly evidence; but on the other it is as distinctly and more commonly and persistently said, Christianity is not meeting the demands of our modern life as a practical force in society. Whatever may be true of its doctrines it is not taking hold of the hard social questions of the day; it is not leading the reform for humanity. Must it not be acknowledged that as in the doctrine of the person of Christ there has been held a one-sided view, obscuring, now his divinity and now his humanity; so in the church life as representing him has there been partial expression? Sometimes the divine presence has been ignored, the divine prerogatives omitted, and the church of Christ, so called, has ended in a lifeless school of ethical culture, in cold and hard social science, in thin colorless secularism, the supernatural denied, the mystery of life forgotten. With no cross and no resurrection in its history, and no judgment in its horizon, it has power over neither heart nor conscience; and with no message but a denial of faith, and no evangel but the evolution of humanity, it is without a prayer in its weakness or a song in its work. This is the most barren product of our nineteenth century religious life, the least among the spiritual forces of our time.

This is the church with the Christhood gone out of it — “humanitarianism,” the least of all isms.

But again, the church has become a poor weak thing, because of isolation from human interests. There has been at times a fatal “otherworldliness” as well as worldliness. In contemplation of the unseen and the eternal, the present, on which it all depends, has been well-nigh forgotten; in awe of the supernatural of the gospels, and of the infinite possibilities of the life to come, the life that now is has been belittled and neglected.

Here therefore is indicated the two directions in which our church life needs to be developed: first, in the direction of a return to the out-and-out supernaturalism of the primitive church; and second, in the direction of a thorough application of the gospel to the problems of modern social life in the spirit and by the methods of a true science. These two things seem very different. They have been kept apart, but Christ united the human and the divine, and the church is the body of Christ. The call of God is back to the primitive faith. Give us this and we shall see the primitive heroism. Our answer to the challenge of modern unbelief must be not an apology for, or an explanation of, the miraculous in our gospel, but an assertion of it and a return to it; instantaneous conversions, transformed characters, supernatural lives of sacrifice, mighty works of love — this first, and then a new assertion of the human side, a broadening of the sphere of the church, a thorough humanizing of its mission. It is the entire truth of incarnation that we need. It is a whole Christ that we want, not an applied but an embodied Christianity.

And now permit me to ask, do we not have here in this truth of life the philosophical, practical basis for our theory of missions; in this truth of embodiment of life the organic idea for the shaping of all agencies, plans, and policies? For example, the Board, if it is an organ of the churches, an expression of their life, should seek above all things else in the conduct of its affairs to keep in close vital connection with the churches. If it embodies the spiritual force of the churches in the greatest work given them to do in this world, then the union with the churches cannot be too close. It is not the method, but the fact, that is essential.

If this is a life process which we seek to promote, so that there is to be an unfolding by each person, by each church, and by each group of churches, under the control of the Christ type,

of its own distinctive life, then evidently we must expect in a world-wide work variety of form and of administration, in the midst of general uniformity, according to the law of all life. It follows also that we may not expect to combine in one person, or in one class of persons, all needed gifts. The teaching is that "there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit, and there are diversities of administration, but the same Lord." "Gifts of healing, helps, governments," as well as prophets and teachers; the lesson is not the multiplying, as we have been largely doing, the agents of one kind, but the multiplying of the kind of agents. It further follows that liberty to each individual and church for honest thinking and acting, is a very sacred right and an entirely essential thing. It is significant that Christleib, after his deliberate study of the whole field, should say: "There is nothing in which a man should work so little, according to a definite model, as in missions."

Again, it follows that the principle of judgment is that which our Lord declared: "By their fruits shall ye know them," and that the divine method of administration is revealed in that saying of his: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit." For missionaries we must then have men and women who are branches of the true vine, who believe in and believe on "Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God," implicitly accept his teaching, and who are members of his visible body; men and women, therefore, who have received into their own souls, from him, by the Spirit, a new life, and who embody in lives of love, in sacrifice, this life; men and women, therefore, whose strenuous effort it shall be to save now, in this accepted time, individual souls for whom Christ died, by urging upon them the free offer of eternal life, and who shall train them to embody this same eternal life, individually and collectively, in the verities of character and of conduct.

At our mission stations we need, in obedience to the same principle, to promote the conditions for such organic life as shall in the local church best realize, at any given place or time, by the informing power of the indwelling Spirit, the scriptural idea of the church as Christ's body; representing to the world his thought, his feeling, his will; which shall rightly express in its relation to all other Christian bodies, the true oneness of all Christians, the

unity in diversity of the true church catholic; and which shall so ally itself with, possess, and use all the agencies and forces about it, as to illustrate the truth that Christ is the head not only over all races, but over "all things," to his church, which in its last results shall be seen to be "the fullness of him who filleth all in all."

Concerning polity, may I reiterate that our principle, which demands outward form — more it may be than we have always had — demands also that it be flexible to the changing wants of changing times. Organization cannot be confined in the rigid lines of the politico-ecclesiasticism of the past. That cannot be kept in the narrow limits imposed by one age or nation, which was meant for all lands and for the everlasting years. The forces of the future are only germinant today; life is growth, truth is progress, and history is development. We look before, not behind; forward, not back. Especially in the interest of that unity — not uniformity — which the world wants, and the heart of Christendom longs for, do we plead for the *life idea versus the ecclesiastical idea*.

There are two existing theories, which from the nature of the case are irreconcilable: One is that our Lord committed the purity of doctrine, the exercise of discipline, and the leadership in work, to a select body of men supernaturally endowed, who by the laying on of their hands should convey this supernatural power, this divinely given prerogative of rulership, from generation to generation. The organization and forms of the church are thus independent of the people of the church, and not the outgrowth and embodiment of their spiritual life. By whatever name called, this is the prelatical, the hierarchical church.

The other theory is that the rulership belongs to the childlike spirit; that purity of doctrine, faithfulness in discipline, and responsibility for spreading the kingdom, depend ultimately upon the membership; that our Lord committed to each succeeding generation of those gathered together in his name, *and not to an order of men among them*, the honor of his kingdom and of his name. They believe that he is now, today, in his church, and that by his Holy Spirit, in each succeeding generation, believers are taught and guided; that, having given to his followers his Spirit, he is not afraid to trust them with his cause. These two theories are diametrically opposite; all dreams of unity between them are idle. Any church that attempts to mediate these two

within itself is destined to division, and the line of cleavage is already determined. Under one or the other of them the unity of the church of the future will be found. We do not believe that it will come under the first. Accepting the latter, there may be the adoption of any forms or methods made most expedient by the character and circumstances of the people and by the exigencies of the work, be it an archbishop with his "throne" and his "palace" — no, that is going too far — but be it a diocesan bishop or a Congregational church meeting.

We plead, also in the interest of unity, for the *life idea versus the logic idea*. Logic and metaphysics are inseparable from any worthy study of the Christian system, but we are consulting about a working Christianity, and for this we contend that we need not a common theological science, but the same constructive force; not a metaphysic but a fact; not a dogma but an experience; not a syllogism but a history. Let us send into the Lord's vineyard to keep the vines, trained gardeners rather than skilled dialecticians. We can come together over the best methods of cultivating the vine, but the task would be more difficult upon an hypothesis concerning theodicy.

The outlook towards Christian unity in the foreign field is cheering. The movement towards this in Japan and in Mexico, the ardent expression of desire for it from every land, and the discussions at missionary conferences, national and international, are full of hope. Brethren from other lands and in other lands, the body of Christ is one. We too believe in the holy catholic church; we are tired of divided counsel, of sectarian separateness, and of the sinful waste of men and money in rival organizations and multiplied machinery; but we are shut in by old names and traditions, and hampered by complications of vested interests, selfish ambitions, and predilections that are in the blood. You are free. "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Write that on your banners. In the providence of God you are called to be the leaders in this world-wide movement of the time. Sagacious minds have long seen that the unity for which the church wearily waits is to come through practical coöperation in bringing in the kingdom of God. To you, brethren in foreign fields, it is given to bring to an issue the providential new conditions of life and thought, by practical unity in saving men. Go on then. From this platform we bid you God speed. A bold, vigor-

ous, patient policy of coöperation, let us hope confederation, is called for. Such policy adopted will commend itself to the business common sense of every enlightened person, and will meet quick response in every Christian heart. If our Congregational Christianity means anything it is this: liberty to embody itself, with Christ as the head, in such manner as shall at any time be anywhere right and expedient.

So, then, I leave this boundless theme, and cease the repetition to you of this high, this deep, this broad word, life. How sweet the "silver iterance!" All beauty, all joy, all blessing are in it; all hope and realization, all unfolding and fruition, all fullness and all perfection. The one sacred thing, the one priceless thing, the one ineffable blessing, is life. It is "more life and fuller" that we need. This is the name of the King. He came into a world of the dying and of the dead, and he said: "I am the life." This is God's unspeakable gift, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. At last this divine life shall find its complete embodiment in glory everlasting, and he "shall be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

